

CLAIMS

1. A Free-Reign Walking Machine for the training of animals along a defined training course, the machine comprising:

a supporting structure having at least one fixed rail, the rail being arranged along the training course,

at least one traveler moveably arranged on said rail,

a drive system, and

a number of Moving-Guide-Components adapted to guide the animals when moving, said Moving-Guide-Components being connected to the at least one traveler,

wherein the drive system is adapted to move the traveler and the Moving-Guide-Components along the rail.

2. The Free-Reign Walking Machine of claim 1, comprising a number of travelers arranged on the rail, wherein each Moving-Guide-Component is connected to at least one traveler associated therewith.

3. The Free-Reign Walking Machine of claim 1, wherein the supporting structure comprises two rails in parallel, and wherein the traveler comprises at least two traveler parts and a coupling element to form a traveler bridging the two rails.

4. The Free-Reign Walking Machine of claim 3, wherein the two rails are spaced apart by a distance, and wherein the

coupling element is adapted to compensate for variations in the distance.

5. The Free-Reign Walking Machine of claim 3, wherein the coupling element carries the Moving-Guide-Component.

6. The Free-Reign Walking Machine of claim 1, wherein the drive system comprises a pulling element and a drive capable of moving the pulling element, and wherein the at least one traveler is connected to the pulling element.

7. The Free-Reign Walking Machine of claim 6, wherein the drive is arranged in a fixed position.

8. The Free-Reign Walking Machine of claim 6, wherein the pulling element is a chainlike element having a plurality of rigid chain links pivotally connected to each other.

9. The Free-Reign Walking Machine of claim 8, wherein the chain links are hollow-profile chain links.

10. The Free-Reign Walking Machine of claim 8, wherein the chain links have a substantially rectangular cross section.

11. The Free-Reign Walking Machine of claim 8, wherein the individual chain links are between about 0.2 Meters and about 5 Meters in length.

12. The Free-Reign Walking Machine of claim 11, wherein each individual chain link is approximately 3.5 Meters in length.

13. The Free-Reign Walking Machine of claim 8, wherein the chain links are connected together with a limited longitudinal play in a pulling direction.

14. The Free-Reign Walking Machine of claims 13, wherein the chain links each have an end facing to another chain link, and wherein a resilient member is arranged at the end for reducing contact noises between chain links.

15. The Free-Reign Walking Machine of claim 8, wherein the chainlike element comprises a plurality of joint sections, and wherein the travelers are connected to the chainlike element in the area of the joint sections.

16. The Free-Reign Walking Machine of claim 15, wherein at least one traveler is connected at each joint section.

17. The Free-Reign Walking Machine of claims 1, wherein the training course is a circulating course having at least some straightaway sections.

18. A Free-Reign Walking Machine for automatically guiding horses along a defined training course, the machine comprising:

at least one Moving-Guide-Component for guiding a horse along the defined training course,

a supporting structure adapted to carry the Moving-Guide-Component, and

a drive system for automatically moving the Moving-Guide-Component along a predefined path of movement which substantially corresponds to the training course,

wherein the path of movement is a circulating course having at least one straightaway section.

19. An arrangement for training animals along a defined training course, comprising a supporting structure having at least one fixed rail and comprising a number of Moving-Guide-Components arranged on the supporting structure and being moveable along a path of movement, wherein the path of movement defines the training course, and further comprising at least one traveler moveably arranged on the rail, wherein the Moving-Guide-Components are connected to the at least one traveler.

20. The arrangement of claim 19, wherein a number of travelers are arranged on the rail, which number corresponds at least to the number of Moving-Guide-Components, and wherein each Moving-Guide-Component is connected to at least one traveler.

21. The arrangement of claim 19, wherein the supporting structure comprises a first and a second rail in parallel with each other, and wherein the traveler comprises at least a first and a second traveler part, with the first traveler part being moveably arranged on the first rail and the second traveler part being moveably arranged on the second rail.

22. The arrangement of claim 21, further comprising a coupling element for connecting the first and second traveler parts.

23. The arrangement of claim 22, wherein the coupling element carries the Moving-Guide-Component.

24. The arrangement of claim 19, further comprising a pulling element and a drive unit capable of moving the pulling element, wherein the at least one traveler is connected to the pulling element.

25. The arrangement of claim 24, wherein the drive is arranged in a fixed position at the supporting structure.

26. The arrangement of claim 24, wherein the pulling element is a chainlike element having a plurality of rigid chain links pivotally connected to each other.

27. The arrangement of claim 26, wherein the chain links are hollow-profile chain links having a substantially rectangular cross section.

28. The arrangement of claim 26, wherein the individual chain links are between approximately 0.2 Meters and approximately 5 Meters in length.

29. The arrangement of claim 28, wherein the individual chain links are approximately 3.5 Meters in length.

30. The arrangement of claim 26, wherein the chain links are connected together with a limited longitudinal play in pulling direction.

31. The arrangement of claim 24, wherein the drive unit comprises a motor and at least two drive wheels engaging the pulling element, wherein the motor is configured to drive the at least two drive wheels in opposite rotational directions.